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MISSIONARY AND SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS IN AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN

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AMERICA and Great Britain are closely related by ties of history, by ties of commerce, by ties of religion, by ties of language, by ties of national and political interest, and by ties of blood relationship. It is not strange, therefore, that missionary and spiritual movements in these two countries should act and react. It is not necessary to go back to the time of Wesley and to colonial days in New England for illustrations of this fact. In recent years scores of evangelists and leading Christian workers from Great Britain have been in America, and America has sent to Great Britain her full quota. The Welsh revival has affected Great Britain profoundly, but it has also affected America, and it has been almost as fully reported in our religious press as it has been reported on the other side of the water.

As to Christian missions, it may be said that in a peculiar way the burden of the evangelization of the world rests upon America and Great Britain. To these two countries has been given in large measure the wealth of

the world. In the providence of God the veins and mines of gold in Australia (formerly New Netherlands) and in South Africa were withheld from the eyes of men until these countries came under the control of a Protestant and an English-speaking people. The gold on the Pacific Coast was not discovered by the Spaniard and the gold in Alaska by the Russian, but these vast sources of wealth were reserved for Protestant America. Why is it that God has so marvelously prospered these nations in the development of trade and international commerce? Surely God has given to America and Great Britain their full share of the wealth of the world, and it is not strange, therefore, that of the total amount given to foreign missions about forty per cent is given by America, forty per cent by Great Britain, two per cent by the British colonies, and the balance by the rest of the world. It is only within the past two or three years that America has approximately equaled Great Britain in the amount given to foreign missions, and these countries now seem destined to go side by side in friendly competition for the honor of contributing the largest sums for world evangelization. Not only do these nations have the wealth, but they have dominion also. "Out of a total area of fifty-two millions of square miles for the whole world, the British empire embraces twelve millions, somewhat less than one fourth, and of a total population of 1,500,000,000 (allowing a liberal

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estimate of 650,000,000 for peoples not brought under any census), the proportion is somewhat in excess of one fourth." If you add to the immense territorial holding of Great Britain the territory under the flag of the United States, and if more especially you consider the tremendous political influence of these two countries with nations that are not immediately under their respective flags, it is easy to see that God has in a very special way prepared the English-speaking people, as no other people have been prepared, for the work of extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. Yes, these countries have wealth and dominion, and they are also the strongholds of Protestant and evangelical faith. To one, therefore, who has a vision which reaches beyond the confines of his local church, or his town, or his state, or his country; to one who has a world vision and who prays and works for the world-wide extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, there must come a feeling of concern for the welfare of the spiritual and missionary interests in Great Britain and America. If one country lags behind it must be a concern to the other. If one has developed more effective methods it is in duty bound to pass these methods on to the other. If one has received a great spiritual blessing it must seek to pass that blessing on to the other. What, then, is the general situation in Great Britain and in America?

In the first place, with regard to missions it

may be said that in both countries the Missionary Societies are face to face with what seem to be boundless opportunities in almost every mission field. In the providence of God the doors of opportunity have opened wide, and everywhere the mission fields are "white to harvest." In the second place, in both countries the missionary societies are unable to harvest the fields in an adequate way for lack of funds. Every leading missionary society of Great Britain has had during the past year to face a serious deficit, and while most of the American societies have had no deficit, the secretaries of five or six of the leading missionary societies in America have within the past two months put into writing statements to the effect that there must be an immediate increase in contributions of from fifteen to fifty per cent if they are to adequately care for the work for which they have already accepted responsibility, to say nothing about entering new fields which seem to be providentially opened to them. At the Cleveland Convention Bishop Fowler said: "When God opens a door before a people that is his command to them to enter, and his promise to back them to the extent of his resources. . . . Whenever a people sees God's beckoning hand and hears his call and is obedient to the heavenly vision, then they rise to higher levels, take up heavier burdens, achieve greater results, and reap wider harvests for God. But whenever through fear or selfishness or diversion they

hesitate and doubt, then they see some braver people step to the front and take the place which they might have had."

It is evident that at the present rate of progress the missionary societies will not be able to enter the open doors. The Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church has probably had during the past three years the largest increase in its regular contributions of any missionary society in the world, and "the people called Methodists" have great reason for encouragement, but no one who understands the needs of our mission fields at home and abroad would dream for a moment that the splendid advance which has been made is adequate to meet the urgent needs of the case. If one will attend the sessions of the General Missionary Committee for a week he will become convinced to his entire satisfaction that the present income is utterly inadequate.

What, then, is to be done with regard to world evangelism? In Great Britain and in America this is evidently a time of crisis for missions. The church has accustomed herself to think of a slight increase for each succeeding year and, notwithstanding the rapid accumulation of wealth, is fairly well satisfied to increase her per capita gift a few pennies in a decade, whereas, in the providence of God, she finds herself face to face wth opportunities which require a doubling or a trebling or a quadrupling of her offering to missions. The wisest leaders of the church are seeking

for a solution of the problem. There are some who feel that the need of the hour is a great spiritual awakening, and until that time comes there is very little need of attempting greater things. There are others who feel that the church is not wrong at heart, but that if it has the information it will give adequately. An increasing number believe that the need of the hour is a combination of a great educational campaign and a mighty spiritual awakening.

Whatever the solution may be, the leaders are more and more turning their eyes to the on-coming host of the young, who are a supremely important factor to-day and who to-morrow will be in the thick of the fight. In England and in America there are enrolled in the Sunday schools and young people's societies not less than twenty-one million children and young people. In other words, the army of the young enrolled under the banners of Jesus Christ in these two countries is nearly three times as large as the standing armies of the civilized world, including the immense army of over four million accredited to Russia. Because, therefore, of the very size of the army, because of the impressionability of the young people, because of their present and future possibilities in the giving of life and money, and because of their high potentiality in prayer, the church is giving increasing attention to their spiritual development, and Bible study and mission study courses are multiplying.

It is evident that ordinary methods and ordinary rates of increase in membership and in giving will not suffice. The time has come for the extraordinary, and it is probable that this will come only through a special outpouring of the Spirit of God in answer to prayer. Is it not true that the great need of the hour is for an ever-increasing volume of intercessory prayer, not only that laborers may be thrust forth into the harvest, but that the church may be profoundly stirred to do its full duty for the cause of world evangelism, and that there may be such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit as that we may experience in this country such revivals of pure and undefiled religion as have not been seen since apostolic days. It will not suffice to sit down and criticise existing plans and organizations and existing methods. The great missionary societies of the world have been built up by years of most careful experimentation, and the able leaders of these societies have spent much time in anxious consideration of ways and means for more thoroughly arousing the churches. Has not the time come for sympathetic, aggressive, and prayerful cooperation on the part of all who believe in, and work for, the evangelization of the world? If we look at the difficulties which are to be encountered in thoroughly arousing the churches of the English-speaking and Protestant world, we may become discouraged, but if we look to the omnipotent God and remember what he has done during the past century

in breaking down the barriers and in preparing the way, may we not read with new courage the challenge of the Almighty which is found in the thirty-second chapter of Jeremiah: "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?"

But what of the great spiritual awakening which will unquestionably precede or accompany the missionary revival? There are signs of promise in America. Last winter in many of the great cities there were seasons of great refreshing, and during the past summer at Ocean Grove and in other places revival movements have been reported, but as yet we have nothing to approach the spirit of prayer and the spirit of expectancy which one finds everywhere in Great Britain. There is no question but that the revival movement is on in England and in Wales and that it is beginning to affect Scotland and Ireland. You feel the impulse of the Welsh revival almost as soon as you set foot on English soil. I was not able to visit Wales, and so did not see the work in active progress, but for that very reason I was perhaps able to judge better of its influence outside of Wales. The following incidents are illustrative of everyday experiences: As I was entering the room to deliver the first address in Great Britain at the Nonconformist Summer School a stranger put his arm about me and said, "Mr. Taylor, I have been praying and shall continue to pray to-night that God may especially empower you for service in Great

Britain by an outpouring of his Spirit." I looked into his face and saw that it shone with an unearthly light, and I said to him, "You have been in the Welsh revival." He said, "Yes, I have just come from Wales." I went rowing with a party of young people on beautiful Derwentwater, the lake on which Keswick is situated. A young lady in the party, light-hearted and care-free, left us, intending to make a brief call at a farmhouse near at hand, and after an extended absence she came back with changed countenance. We asked her if anything serious had happened. She said there were two Welsh evangelists who were conducting a revival service in that little farmhouse, and the girl was not the same girl again during my visit, because she had visited that Welsh prayer meeting. I had the privilege of speaking to a large company of Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates. They were being entertained by a wealthy lady. During the dinner hour, although they were as full of life as any group of college men you would ordinarily meet, the whole conversation of the hour was concerning the Welsh revival, the Torrey-Alexander meetings, and the great spiritual awakening in Oxford and Cambridge in connection with the visits of Mr. John R. Mott last winter. As one incident of the conversation, the hostess related that she had recently attended a remarkable prayer meeting in Wales. At six-thirty o'clock in the morning she had gone with friends down into a coal

mine, and as the party took their places they heard coming up through the corridors the sound of men singing the Welsh revival hymns. Soon the miners, with lamps on their heads, came and seated themselves in that dark cavern of the earth. The men of the night shift had been permitted to quit a half hour earlier, and the men of the day shift had come half an hour ahead of time in order that they might have a prayer meeting at that early hour. As they came singing through the corridors of the mine the lady, a member of the Church of England, said it was the stateliest and most inspiring processional she had ever heard.

The Welsh revival is still in progress. Up to April 1, 1905, the names of over eighty-five thousand people had been tabulated by the secular press as having been converted in the Welsh revival alone. Just before sailing from Liverpool, late in July, I read in the press the accounts of great open-air meetings where ten thousand people were assembled in the fields and where God was bowing the assemblage as a field of wheat is bowed by the breath of the wind.

The Torrey-Alexander meetings are another factor in the spiritual awakening in Great Britain. The latest meeting of the London series closed on the day of my arrival in that city. During the three weeks which followed I had opportunity to meet people of all denominations and of all classes, and everywhere I went I heard of the Torrey-Alexander meet-

ings, and, better still, I saw evidences of the results. The London evangelistic campaign, conducted by a strong committee in connection with the visit of these men, was probably one of the most notable and most extensive ever undertaken in Great Britain. It involved the erection of special buildings for the mission, the circulation of five million invitations, a house-to-house canvass which reached a half million people; it involved two hundred great meetings, many of them in the Royal Albert Hall, seating ten thousand people (it is considered to be a notable thing to fill this great hall for a single night for a political meeting, but the Torrey-Alexander meeting filled it for night after night and thousands were turned away); it involved the delivery of the gospel message to over a million and a quarter of people who attended the meetings; it required the expenditure of nearly a hundred thousand dollars in the great campaign, but it resulted in nearly fourteen thousand conversions.

If I should be asked what is the secret of the remarkable spiritual awakening in Great Britain I would unquestionably say that prayer has been preparing God's people for an outpouring of the Spirit of God in pentecostal power. The verse most frequently read in connection with the meetings which I attended in England was Acts 1. 8: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Sa-

maria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Mrs. Penn-Lewis in a recent book entitled The Awakening in Wales calls attention to the fact that the Welsh revival was born in prayer and is being carried forward in a spirit of prayer. The following are among the many indications that she has been able to trace the source of this mighty stream:

"In 1901 the Lord drew near to one of his servants in the ministry, and gave him such a revelation of his glory that he cried, like Isaiah, 'Woe is me,' and entered on a life in God unknown before. Then, in a quiet spot on the banks of a Welsh river, burdened over the spiritual condition of the country, he spent hours in prayer, pleading with God with many tears that he would come forth in power and work in the land. Again, in a quiet town in the western part of Wales, we hear of two and three women meeting together for prayer during several years, pleading for 'revival' among the women of the town.

"We go to the Rhondda Valley, where afterward the Spirit of God swept with great power, and hear of some who for years had been pleading for a revival which should 'sweep over the whole world.' We do not wonder that such souls are taken into the secrets of God, the Holy Spirit saying to one of them just three days before the valley was moved by the mighty tide of life, 'Get thee up, . . . there is the sound of abundance of rain.'

"We find in Monmouthshire the hand of the Lord upon two sisters, one an invalid, who, during 1903-04, were burdened over the prevalence of sin and the increase of crime in the county, one sister saying tearfully, 'I cannot sleep day nor night because my dear Lord is despised and set at naught.' Another child of God—a retiring, timid lady—bemoaning the deadness of the churches, said, 'I shall die unless God exerts his power and sends a revival!' "

As the Welsh revival was born in prayer, so too was the Torrey-Alexander Mission. Long before any plan had been made for such a tour a company of men and women were accustomed to meet on Saturday night, in the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, to pray for a world-wide outpouring of the Spirit of God. One night Mr. Torrey was moved to say in connection with that prayer meeting that he believed God had called him to begin a world-wide campaign. This was on Saturday. On Monday he was met by two business men who, it is said, knew nothing about the meeting of Saturday night. They told him that they felt moved of God to suggest that he undertake a world tour and that they would help him to finance the campaign. In conjunction with these events came an invitation from Australia, where for eleven years a band of ministers and laymen had met to plead with God for a "big revival"; and so from one praying band in Australia came an invitation

to the leader of another praying band in America and the mission began. It is not strange, therefore, that the story of the triumphs of that tour which has now extended around the world should read like a story of apostolic days. The motto of the Torrey-Alexander meetings was written in Dr. Torrey's own handwriting and reproduced in facsimile to be hung in the homes of the people connected with the movement, and this is what he says: "Pray for great things. Expect great things. Work for great things; but above all, pray."

God is able to do greater things for America than he has done for Wales. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And he has said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. . . . And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And it was our Lord himself who also said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

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